ARROW COMICS

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Fantastic Fanzine

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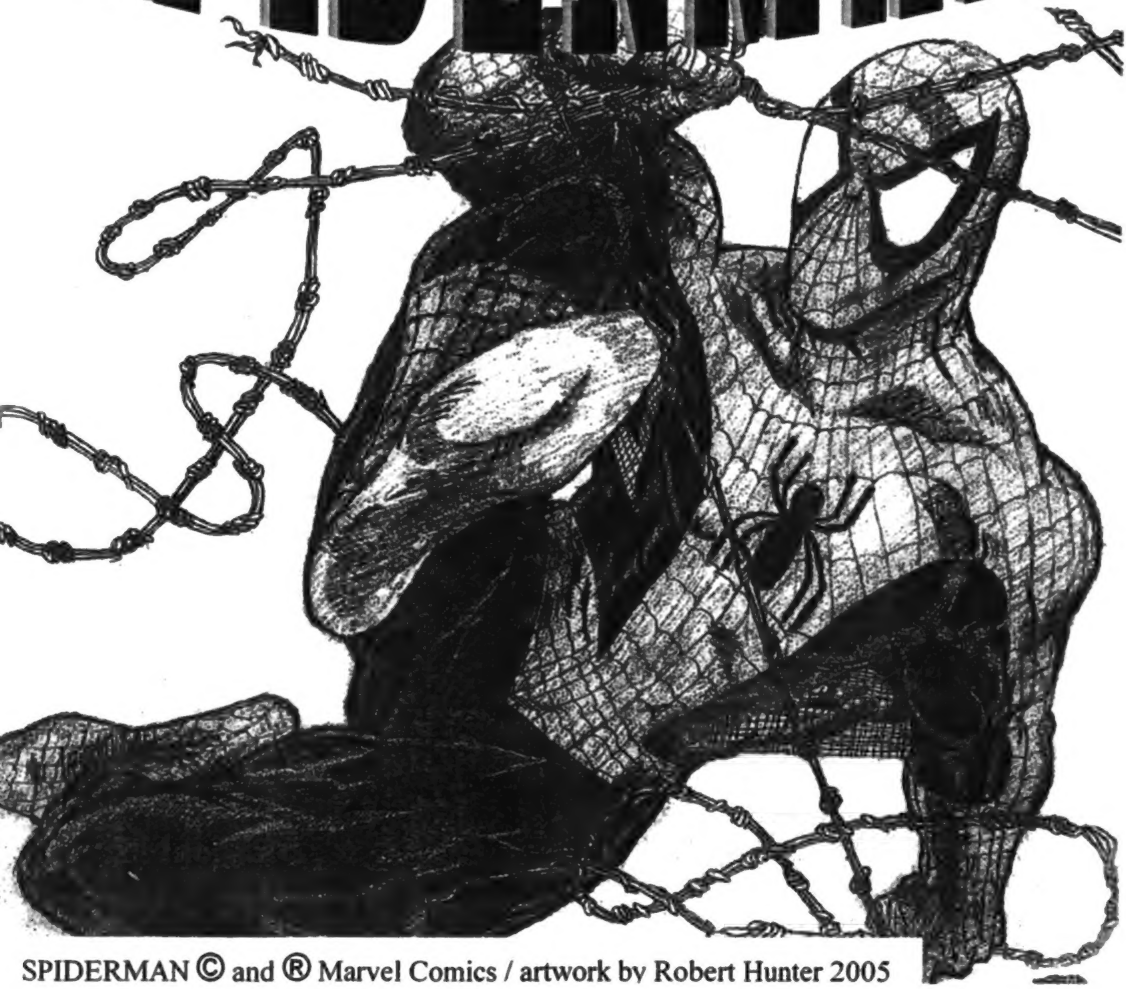
Celebrating Comics' Fantastic Fan Scene!

SPIDERMAN



SPIDERMAN © and ® Marvel Comics / artwork by Robert Hunter 2005

YE GOOD OLE EDITOR'S PAGE

Wow!!! Whadda ya know? We've made it to our third issue and on time, too!! I couldn't have done it without Stu, Rob, David, Martin Knight,and cover artist Robert Hunter, who all chipped in to make this issue possible. Without them and you... oh wait, that's right. You didn't participate. You did pick up our 'zine, so that counts for something, but this mag is made by you, the fans, with some help from a couple of ol' school guys. I want to turn some heads and make people notice some of the fine talent still looking to get discovered, if only on a local level to start. So come on, drag out the pen and paper or punch those keyboards. I want to add more pages but you got to fill them!

Okay, enough of the "Rah-Rah" speech! Let's get down to this issue, which spotlights one of my favorite characters of all time: Spiderman!! Stu brings us his take on the Webhead, and a certain Japanese Spiderman that will remind you of the Power-Rangers TV show! Marty Knight chimes in with a review of the webcrawler's flagship book *Amazing Spiderman*. And we drop in on Comic Rox down in Southgate.

Oh, and then there is the Snoop and his low down on the industry. All that's missin' is you, so come on!

I hope to see everyone at the upcoming Motor City Con in the middle of the month. And again, at Snap, featured below, near the end of the month.

All right, I've rambled on enough. Go on and get to reading the rest of this issue then drop us a line at the address below or at www.arrowcomics.com.

Ralph Griffith

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The SNOOP'S

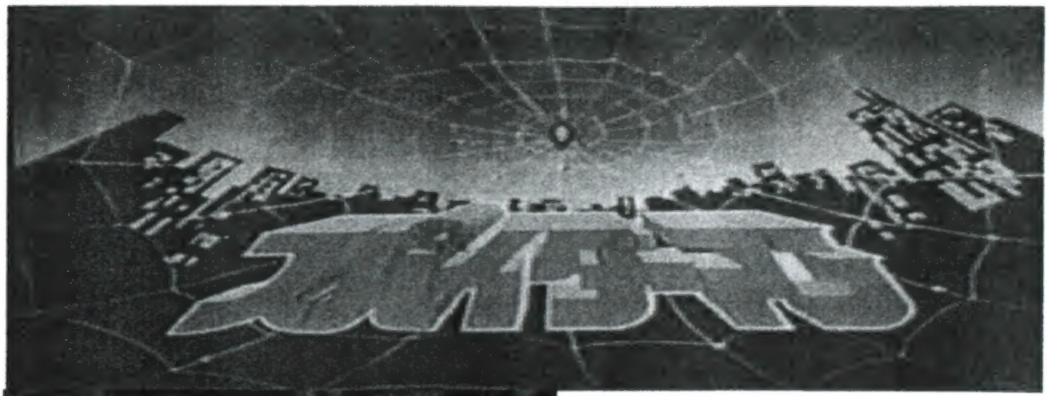
Headlines and Views on the latest comic news!!!

DIAMOND DOGS the little guy. Do they? Or are they really subsidizing the smaller press? Those are the two views on the new restrictions on minimum wholesale purchase order of $1200. This roughly equates to 500 copies of a comic with a cover price of three bucks or more. Magnanimously, they have stated they will lower their standards for certain elite submissions. I say elite because *they* are the sole arbiters of what is a worthy product for the rest of us to see. I remember the original Arrow Comics/Fantastic Fanzine days when their were indeed various minimum print runs/wholesale amounts, but then again their were about 15 major, minor and fringe distributors of comics and some had minimums of 25 copies or less. There was an infrastructure in place for new books to build up a grassroots following before being picked up by one or more of the Big Three: Capital, Glenwood or Diamond. Where is that infrastructure now? Diamond is it, virtually be-all and end-all of comics distribution. What fantastic success! But when does success go too far? It is reasonable, as they stated in a recent press release they made the move because it costs money to operate a business and any product that is not realizing a profit needs to be trimmed. Unprofitable books will be *removed* from the pipeline to the Direct Market. It is strictly a straightforward business decision. Wall Street would approve. However, the X-factor in this particular equation is the fact that we still desire to look on comics as an art form. It isn't the same as marketing peas or a dish soap. There needs to be some cutting edge stuff out on view so readers can weigh in on where the market and the art should go. That's why we are putting out this 'zine, to be a part of that *real* community of fans that span the nation. Do your part.

THE RUNES REVEAL that Runemaster Studios is parting ways with current publisher Alias Enterprises. Citing material breech of contract on the part of Alias. Runemaster produces *Lions, Tigers and Bears* as well as The *Gimoles*. Alias handles the publishing end, including the billing department apparently. Mike Bullock, president of Runemaster, says they have run out of options in "securing what is owed to us." Perhaps Alias dreamed too big too soon. Not that I disagree with aggressive marketing and starting out with a bang. But it takes deep pockets to take the hit if you're going to pop out numerous brand new titles in a tighter market. Nonetheless, it takes some guts to have the kind of faith in your product to just shoot the works. Some gambles just don't pay off, I guess.

HISTORY IS NOW. A History of Violence, with art by our own Vince Locke, saw it's wide screen interpretation on September 23rd at local theatres. I'll be seeing it soon. Maybe someone out there will review it for Fantastic Fanzine. Any takers?

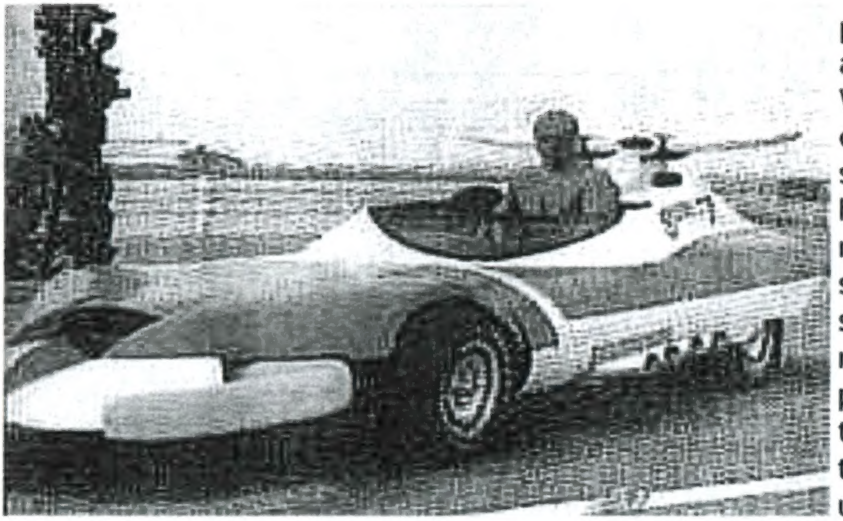
Supaida-Man, Supaida-Man!



Everyone and their uncle has seen Spider-Man on the television, whether it be the newer 'toons or his stint on the Electric Company children's program, his 1970's live action show or of course the original animated series. Not too many folks are familiar with his show that aired in Japan though.

Airing from May, 1978 to March, 1979 Japanese viewers got their own version of the amazing one, complete with giant robots and wacky aliens. Toei (a very large animation/television studio in Japan) totally revamped Spider-Man when they obtained the rights to him. Instead of being bitten by a radioactive spider he was given a bracelet from Garia, an alien from the planet Spider, who had crashed on Earth in his space ship The Marveller (hmmm). Garia had been doing battle with the totally evil Iron Cross Army led by the nefarious Professor Monster (this guy looks like Dr. Doom, just not as cool). Yamashiro Takuya (pseudo Peter Parker/motocross champion) found his way to the crash site after having several visions of his father in distress. Sure enough his father dies (thanks in no small part to a giant robot dinosaur) and Yamashiro takes up the cause for good ole Garia. Whew.

Not surprisingly there is no J. Jonah Jameson (or Green Goblin or Doc Ock) to be found in this series, instead there is the thorn in Spideys' side known as Amazon. She spends her time writing bunk editorials on the web head trying to



present him as a monster. When that doesn't work she straps on her best dominatrix gear and sicks her strange mutant men on him in person. When the going gets tuff Spidey uses his trusty wrist communicator (which also contains his costume when not in use) to call upon his giant robot, Leopardon. Leopardon also doubled as a cool ride known as the Spider-Machine GP-7.

The series lasted for a rather impressive 41 episodes and more importantly

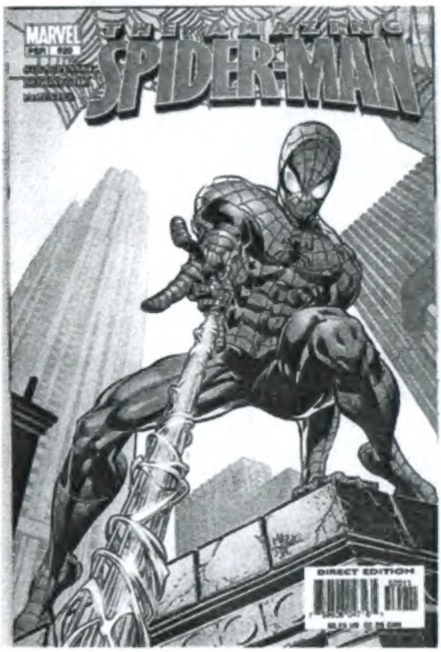
acted as the spring board for future Sentai (Japanese superhero) television shows. The series was the first to show the hero fighting the villain normal sized then going at it again giant robot/monster style. This of course has become a tried and true plot device in these types of programs to this very day. Go-Go Supaida-Man!

Rob Thomas

COMIC REVIEWS

THE OUTSIDER'S EDGE

by *Martin Knight*

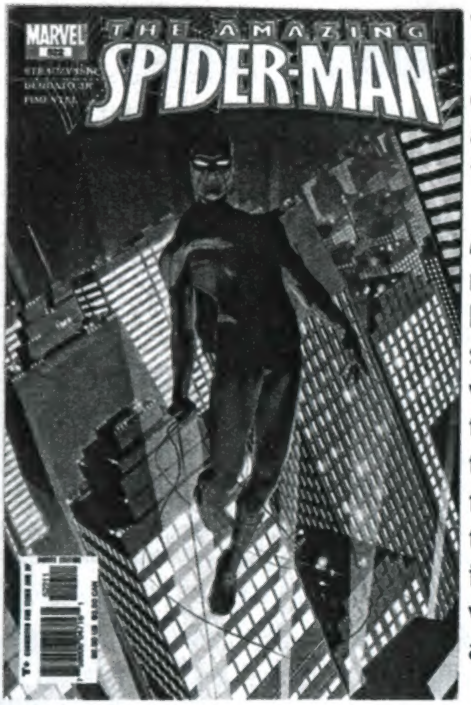


When fanzine editor Ralph asked me to review current Amazing Spiderman issues #520-523, I was very happy, seeing how Spidey's the reason why I started reading comics many years ago. Although I haven't read any comics for a while, and haven't bought any that weren't to be resold for more than fifteen years, I was pumped up to review the latest issues of one of my favorite Marvel characters. So let's move on and get to the reviews.

Issue #520: I liked the intro of the four new Hydra villains that resembled the Avengers both old and new. I like the flirting between Aunt May and Jarvis, the Avengers' butler. I have to tell you though, that as much as I enjoyed the flirting, it wasn't as much fun as Aunt May putting the Wolverine in his place. I also liked having the Avengers in the issue. Art was good; the best scene was of the fake Thor holding up a car while deflecting bullets with his spinning hammer.

What I didn't like was Spidey was only in action for a mere three pages. What's up with that??? Let's see... it's Spiderman's premiere title and all he has is three pages of costume action? Not Cool. Overall the issue was all right except for this glaring problem, in my eyes. I'll give it 5 out of 10

Issue #521: I didn't care for this issue being a fan who loves Spidey action. This issue was a big M.J. / Peter Parker drama, and Pete doing a little detective work finding Hydra's hideout. Oh, and the little M.J.-Peter-Tony Stark subplot.



While the art was okay, nothing stood out for me. Once again the worst part in my opinion was the lack of any real Spidey action. Hmmm...hope I'm not seeing a trend here. This one is only a 4 out of 10.

Issue #522: This issue continues the M.J. / Tony Stark tabloid sub-plot. Some more Aunt May - Jarvis flirting and Peter knocking Wolvie out the window for a smart remark. The issue finishes strong with a flurry of Spidey action. Spidey enters the Hydra compound and it's action the rest of the way. Finally some fisticuffs with Spidey involved for more than just a couple of pages. Best scene is the last page as Spiderman faces off with the four evil Avengers. No gripes about this issue, 6 out of 10.

Issue #523: This issue starts off with action and keep rolling through the whole book! If you love a Spiderman book with lots of action like I do, then this is the issue you need to read. The issue ends with a cliffhanger as Spidey heroically disables a missile only to seemingly fall to his doom on the last panel. The art was very good here. I am pleased to endorse this issue to one and all. I give this issue a 9 out of 10! Great Issue!!!

The Amazing Spidermen:
THE MEN BEHIND THE MASK

by Stuart Kerr

Who wouldn't like to find a copy of Amazing Fantasy #15 in a box in the attic? It's worth more than a small fortune now, but at the time it was the last issue of a series that wasn't pulling its weight beside the likes of Tales of Suspense, Tales to Astonish, Journey Into Mystery, or Strange Tales. It was virtually a throw-away issue to Marvel, so they weren't taking much of a risk running a story about a teen bitten by a radioactive spider, thus gaining the spider's powers. Yet forty-plus years later, Spiderman is Marvel Comics' flagship character.

What makes Spiderman a favorite of so many for so long? Is it his particular powers? No, while Spidey's powers are both cool and formidable, there had been characters with powers of all sorts, sizes and colors, and from all sorts of origins for nearly twenty years when everyone's favorite webslinger appeared on the scene. Was Peter Parker so suave and sophisticated that everyone wanted to be like him? Hardly. He was a nerdy teenager, totally disrespected by his peers. So what brought a character born in the last issue of a doomed title to four-title status, with various cartoon series (including the most beloved and well-known theme song of any comic character), a live-action TV show, and now a series of three highly successful big screen pictures? Does anyone think the third one will bomb? Not me.

Spiderman caught on because all those nerdy kids who were reading comics back in the sixties could relate to the character. As far as we know, none of those comic readers fell out of the sky in a spaceship from another planet, nor were they orphaned when their fabulously rich parents were murdered by a street criminal. They were not raised by wolves or gorillas. Spiderman was pretty much like them. At least Peter Parker was. Maybe he was smarter than the average kid (okay, way smarter), but he was not immune to the likes of public school humiliations, bullies, and lack of influence over the opposite sex. And Peter, while basically a good kid, was selfish just like a normal teen. So much so that it led in his very first appearance to the death of his beloved Uncle Ben. Batman was an innocent bystander to his parents' death and was evermore scarred by the experience. Spiderman, on the other hand, had to shoulder some of the blame himself. Talk about drama.

Spiderman co-creator Steve Ditko

Spiderman is where he is today because of the men who brought him to life. Stan Lee and Steve Ditko created the character initially and led him through the first few years' adventures. Along the

way they also created one of the greatest rogues galleries of all time: Electro, Vulture, Green Goblin, Molten Man and the Lizard amongst others. Peter Parker continued to suffer from teenage angst while his alter ego battled villains in the back alleys and on the rooftops of NYC.

John Romita Sr. took over the art chores with issue #39 and created the now "classic" look of Spidey. Romita helmed the book for nearly seven years. The book was also graced by the likes of Gil Kane, Roy Thomas and Gerry Conway. By the time Spiderman turned 100, the book had had many great storylines, including one of the most dramatic scenes in comics history, the death of Gwen Stacy. The three issue arc of 96 - 98 with the infamous drug-related stories were not comics code approved, yet Marvel printed them anyway. There was real drama here that pushed the envelope of comics story-telling. The story arc planted the seeds for the Harry Osborn/Green Goblin plotline.

Jim Shooter instigated a long and popular storyline during the Secret Wars saga, when he introduced the new black and white costume. As we all know, this costume was a living entity which became Venom and later Carnage, two new villains to be added to Spidey's already impressive list of enemies.

Image Comics President Todd MacFarlane

Arguably one of Spiderman's most revered artists was Todd MacFarlane, and Spidey was riding an all-time high during most of MacFarlane's turn on the book. Todd banked on that huge popularity to gather a few other superstar artists and break away from Marvel to form Image Comics. If not for that Spidey stint, would Todd have had the wherewithal to start his own company? That's up for debate, but Spiderman was not some dog title when MacFarlane came on board. It was a great opportunity and a great honor to work on a Spidey book.

Sam Raimi has done a magnificent job of translating the webslinger onto the big screen. There is no doubt in my mind that Raimi understands the Spiderman/Peter Parker character the way comic book readers do. Sure, he condensed twenty years of history into a two-hour movie. Neither Gwen Stacy nor her police captain father exist in Raimi's celluloid version, yet he captured the essence of those early Spidey stories perfectly. It did bug me in the second movie that Webhead was seen several times without his webbed head covered, but I got over it. In each instance it did do something to move the plot forward, so all is forgiven Sam, all is forgiven.

And it just wouldn't be fair to write about the men behind the mask without mentioning Tobey Maguire. I am completely satisfied with him as the choice to play the

continued on back inside cover

Local Fan

My car was down this past Monday, delaying my visit to Comic Rox Collectibles at 19190 Eureka Rd. Phone # 734-324-3160, in Southgate, until Wednesday. And we all know what day that is....new comic day. However store operator Matt Rychlinski took time from stocking the selves to answer some questions.

When I arrived at the store one of the first things I noticed was the large selections of statues and busts. Also on display was a wide array of posters and prints, along with some original art for sale. A huge number of figures were lining the back walls along with over 150 short boxes full of back issues. The Rox has been a staple of the downriver community for over five years.

According to Matt, top selling titles include anything related to The House of M, all the Ultimate line, Astonishing X-Men, New Avengers and most of DC's Batman titles. The store also has a pull service to make sure you don't miss your favorite titles.

Store Operator: Matt Rychlinski

Matt's feels readers need to read the Vertigo line, Strangers in Paradise, and all things from his personal favorite pro, Warren Ellis. He points out that when get gets someone to read one they come back for more.

If you haven't been by the store yet, drop in and tell him what you think.

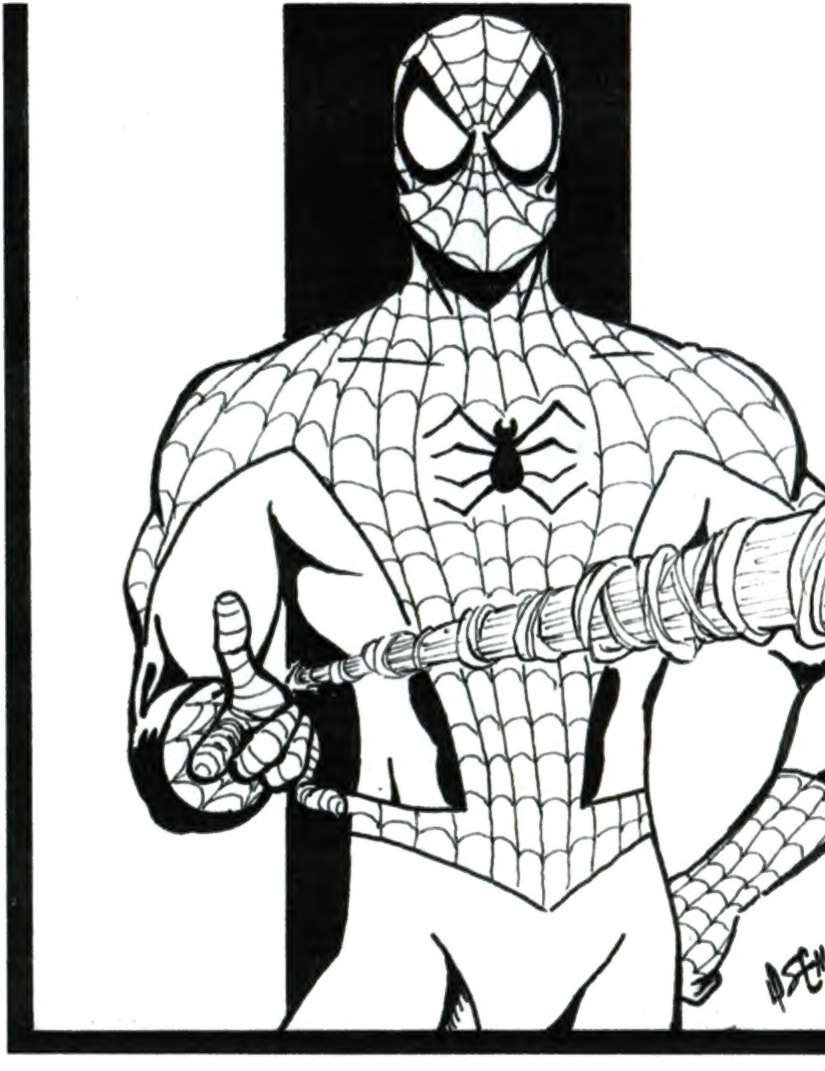
Oh Yeah, he also has some awesome artwork we hope to publish here in issues to come.

COMIC CONTACTS

* Big Ben's Comics	8241 Allen Rd.	Allen Park	(313) 382-0700
* Comics Rox Collectibles	19190 Eureka Rd	Southgate	(734) 324-3160
* Green Brain Comics	13210 Michigan Ave.	Dearborn	(313) 582-9444
* Pack Shack	23565 Van Born Rd.	Taylor	(313) 299-0550
*WonderWorld Comics	22391 Ecorse Rd.	Taylor	(313) 292-8697
A To Z Cards & Comics	32659 Ford. Rd.	Garden City	(734) 425-6780
Back To The Past	27512 Schoolcraft	Livonia	(734) 261-5411
Comics Archives, Inc.	25650 Plymouth	Redford	(313) 937-8860
Comic City	42823 Ford. Rd.	Canton	(734) 981-3561
Time Travelers	3277 W. 12 Mile Rd.	Berkley	(248) 548-7213

webslinger (I'm not going to go off on a tangent about Michael Keaton's Bruce Wayne/Batman, I'm not, I'm not, I'm not!). He looked the part and he pulled off the dual roles well. He could spit out the classic Spidey one-liners and still be an uncertain, unconfident kid when he was living his "normal" life. I'm looking forward to the third (final?) installment.

Over the years many people have had the opportunity to shape Spiderman into what he is today. Those mentioned above are a few of the key players in the Spidey saga, but there have been many writers, plotters, scripters, pencillers, inkers, embellishers, colorists and letterers who have done some of their best work when they were laboring over Spiderman. Not every issue of every Spidey title was a "classic", there were duds and filler issues along the way, but the good so far outweighs the bad amongst hundreds of issues that Spiderman rightly holds a place of high regard in the comics world and will for years to come.



Two awesome Pin-ups from

Fantastic Fanzine

Celebrating Comics' Fantastic Fan Base!

David Ellis 2005